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THE DUTIES OF AN ELEMENTARY-SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

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The writer has served as a school principal under the different types of conditions which present themselves in small and large school systems. He has also had the privilege of coming into intimate contact with the work of a number of elementary-school principals in both small and large systems. The purpose of this discussion, therefore, is not to write an exhortation on an ideal category of duties that elementary-school principals could or should perform, but to describe somewhat in detail the activities that are actually performed by building principals under varying conditions of school organization and administration. Not all principals perform all of the activities that are set forth in this detailed discussion. All principals, however, perform some of these duties, and some do perform all of them to some degree under certain conditions. The writer has attempted to give in addition to the description of the activities performed an estimate of the amount of time that is ordinarily consumed in the successful execution of a number of these duties.

The range of duties that devolve upon the building principal is determined to a large extent by the size of the school system. At least three types of systems can readily be distinguished in any discussion of the work of the building principal. Type A may be designated as the small system consisting of two or three buildings. The superintendent usually has his office in a building which houses the high school as well as the grades of the elementary school for the

ward in which the building is located. The superintendent in this type of system usually teaches two or three classes in the high school and gives the remainder of his time to the most urgent administrative duties. Much of his time is taken up in the performance of clerical office work and in attention to general matters of administration. Such a situation necessarily throws many duties and heavy responsibilities upon the building principal. In fact, under such conditions, the principal performs most or all of the duties set forth in the detailed part of this discussion. This situation calls for a high degree of initiative and vigorous execution on the part of the principal. It also calls for the closest sort of co-operation between principal and superintendent if the superintendent is to have any success in carrying out definite policies in administering the problems of the entire school system. The principal has so many duties which he directly controls that he has very large opportunities for furthering or hindering the carrying out of the general policies of organization and administration that the superintendent may undertake to inaugurate. The work of the principal is generally heavier than it ought to be, and any general policy of the superintendent that does not tend to relieve the pressure put upon the principal is likely to meet with opposition. The principal who keeps in close touch and harmony with the teachers in his building can bring a good deal of influence to bear upon anything that he opposes or advocates in relation to the policies of the superintendent.

Type B may be designated as the middle-sized system of three to six or eight grade buildings. This type is just large enough to free the superintendent from all teaching duties and to give him more or less adequate office help to take care of all clerical matters and general routine details. The superintendent gives his entire time to the problems of organization and the details of administration. The building principal is relieved of many duties and responsibilities of administration

and given more teaching work to do. The superintendent can make frequent visits to buildings and even to classrooms of individual teachers. He is not so dependent upon the good-will and co-operation of the principal in carrying out any general policy. The work of the principal in general, however, is usually not so diversified or heavy as in type A and tends to bring the principal into harmony with the policies of the superintendent. This type of system presents, perhaps, the best opportunity of any for the working out of the distinctive duties of both principal and superintendent and the proper articulation of their respective functions in a well-balanced, efficient school organization. There is plenty of work for both to do without any useless overlapping of duties and without any friction.

Type C may be designated as the large system of eight or ten buildings on up to the largest that may be found in the large cities of the country. This type of school organization again throws manifold duties and responsibilities upon the building principal. The principal usually does little or no teaching and frequently has charge of more than one building; his position is, therefore, comparable to that of a sub-superintendent or to that of the superintendent in the type B system of three or four buildings. The actual administration of school affairs is under the control of the building principal, and he can determine almost absolutely the fate of any policy that may be inaugurated from the superintendent's office. He is in more or less close contact with the work of the individual teachers under his supervision, and he knows the conditions of the ward or wards that he serves in a way that the superintendent cannot. The superintendent is almost wholly dependent upon the principal for detailed information concerning the school and the community, and for recommendations concerning needed changes in the administration of school facilities. This type of situation enables a principal of

long standing to oppose any policy of a superintendent that may not accord with the principal's pedagogical faith. This is especially true when the superintendent is new to the system and undertakes to put the schools on a modern efficiency basis. On the other hand, this situation affords every opportunity for progress and development of efficient modern educational practice when the principal keeps up with the latest studies and experiments in education. The principal has a great opportunity to make a name for himself and at the same time to reflect honor upon his superior officers.

The activities that occupy the time of the building principal may be grouped under two general heads, namely, administrative duties and teaching or pedagogical duties. These large aspects of the principal's work have been subdivided and analyzed in some detail in order to set forth in as concrete a form as possible the activities performed and to permit as definite a statement as possible of the amount of time that each activity requires for efficient performance.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

The administrative duties of the principal may be divided into three main groups, namely, annual and semi-annual routine duties, daily routine, and miscellaneous duties. They will be discussed in this order to bring out the types of habit that are essential to efficient school administration.

I. ANNUAL AND SEMI-ANNUAL DUTIES

At least eight important duties or activities come up either at the beginning or at the close of each year or semester. These duties present problems that must be dealt with and settled within relatively short periods of time. No special importance attaches to the order in which they are here presented. The list merely aims to be comprehensive enough to cover the essential ground.

a) *Supplies and equipment.*—Every year, either at the beginning or at the close of the year, the building principal makes a report to the superintendent concerning the supplies and equipment that will be needed for the coming year's work. These supplies include supplementary books, writing-materials, materials for manual arts, drawing, science and nature-study, home economics, etc., blanks for all the various administrative purposes that utilize reports, book lists for pupils, etc., and janitor supplies. The equipment list includes such items as maps, globes, crayon, erasers, chairs, tables, desks, etc. These lists must be based upon the records of the past year and the outlook for the coming year. The principal must know the probable enrolment of pupils in each grade and the general plans for carrying on the various lines of work that require supplies from the central office. The teachers can supply the data for the most part, with the exception of the general building and janitor supplies and equipment. After the data are all in the hands of the principal they must be checked over carefully and compiled in some systematic tabular form. The principal can then decide upon the exact estimates that are to be submitted to the superintendent's office. If the principal has clerical help, he can check up these lists, compare them with previous lists, make his decisions, tabulate his final data, and submit a reliable report in two or three days. If, however, the principal must without help compile his lists from the data furnished by teachers, janitor, and his own records, then he will need at least five or six days for the making of an accurate report. If the principal undertakes to hand this report in on the last day of the school year, which is very often the last day for which he receives any remuneration, he will have to spend something like three hours each school day outside of regular school hours for the last two weeks of the year in concentrated effort to get the work completed in satisfactory form.

b) Promotion and transfer of classes.—At least once a year and in many schools twice a year occurs the promotion of grades and sections. This performance is usually executed on the first day of the new school year or semester. One practice is to have the pupils assemble in the rooms in which they were last enrolled and then move them in a body to the next room to which they have been assigned. The principal must decide the details of the distribution of grades and sections to the various rooms and teachers, and he must plan and direct the order of procedure in making the shift. Another practice is to instruct the pupils at the close of the year or semester to report to the room in which they are to be enrolled the next school session. This plan avoids the necessity of moving whole sections and grades from one room to another on the first day of the new session. In either case the principal must work out the details of the new organization and distribution of grades, and he must see that the plan is carried out with the least possible loss of time and the least confusion. If the school has adequate physical and teaching facilities and is well graded, about two or three hours will be all the time that the principal needs to work out the details of the new organization. If the first plan is followed in making the readjustments of pupils in rooms, about an hour will be taken up with the shifting and checking up to make sure that no pupil is in the wrong group. The second plan will take about the same amount of time in checking up to make sure that the pupils have understood their instructions and are in the right groups.

Sometimes an unusual influx of new pupils in one or more grades may make necessary a reorganization and distribution of groups after school has been in progress for several weeks. No definite estimate can be made as to how much time and attention such a situation may require before it is finally settled. Sometimes such a situation demands the opening

of a new room and the employment of a new teacher. Such a case will call for a number of reports and conferences with the superintendent and possibly the board of education. Whatever time it may take, the principal is responsible for giving an accurate account of the situation and for taking the initiative in suggesting the solution of the difficulty.

c) *Individual cases of promotion.*—The principal is the mediator between teachers; hence when an individual case of promotion comes up the matter must be referred to the principal for decision. The principal has authority to say that pupil A may be promoted to an advanced grade or section in certain subjects and remain in the same grade for other subjects, or to decide that the pupil may be promoted in everything with the understanding that he will be given an opportunity to make up deficiencies while going on with the advance work. Again, the principal may decide that certain strong pupils may skip a half-year and that very weak ones may be retained in the same grade for an unusual length of time. Two or three such exceptional cases of the one type or the other will be found in each grade at each promotion time. Conferences with teachers and examination of pupils' records will be necessary in order that each case may be decided rationally. All the way from fifteen minutes to an hour for each case according to the length of time the principal has known the pupil and the nature of the particular weaknesses or strong points in the pupil's work will be required. The time of one school day will ordinarily be occupied in dealing with such individual cases in each building under the principal's charge.

d) *Classifying new pupils.*—A number of newcomers enter school at the beginning of every school session. These pupils sometimes present sufficient data in the way of official records of past work to enable the principal to know at a glance just where they belong in his school. Very often, however, these

pupils come with little or no official information concerning their past work. The principal must then determine by some sort of oral or written examination and perhaps by the examination of textbooks which the pupils have studied the group to which each pupil should be assigned either temporarily or permanently, as the evidence seems to warrant. Fifteen minutes to one or two hours will be required to pass upon each case that comes up. At the beginning of each year, and at the beginning of each semester in schools where mid-year enrolment is permitted, a group of from thirty to forty beginners must be received. The principal must check the age of each pupil and conduct the child to the room to which he belongs. A certain amount of telephoning to parents will be involved in this procedure, as well as examination of the school census records. An hour and a half to two hours will be necessary for this task if the principal is to avoid errors and future confusion.

e) Checking up the permanent records of pupils.—Permanent records in some form or other are kept in practically all schools. These may be simply the regular registers that each teacher keeps for her room or they may be an accumulative card-catalogue system kept by the principal. The latter system is best, although it entails more work in its compilation. It saves time, however, in its use, as all the data concerning each pupil are in one place and readily accessible. If the principal merely files the registers that are kept by the individual teachers, the time consumed is negligible, but the data accumulated in that fashion are not readily accessible and in the end waste time and energy. If a card system is employed and the principal has adequate clerical help, the time that he must spend in checking up the accumulation of data will be relatively small. Three to five hours will be necessary, according to the number of teachers' reports, for checking the reports over to be sure that there are no serious

errors or omissions. The teachers themselves may enter the data on the accumulative cards instead of submitting them on blanks and then having the data transferred to the cards. If this plan is followed, the principal will need to take about the same time for checking over the data thus entered to make sure that no serious oversights have been made. The management of this problem is one of the principal's duties, and even if the general scheme for doing it is determined by the superintendent, the principal has the responsibility of seeing that the work is economically and efficiently accomplished.

f) Reports to the superintendent.—The chief reports other than the estimates and recommendations concerning supplies and equipment are: the summation sheets containing the data on enrolment, attendance, and promotion of pupils, ages, sex, nationality, etc., and the report on the success of teachers along with recommendations for promotions in salaries, transfers to different grades of work, dismissals, vacancies to be filled and recommendations for appointment of individuals to fill them. These reports should be accurate and reliable; hence they will require from five to ten hours for their preparation, according to the size of the school and the number of buildings under the charge of the principal. Sometimes the principal is required to submit a detailed report showing the cost per pupil for teaching, janitor service, administrative service, building maintenance, etc., for his ward. This requires another five to ten hours or even longer, according to the number of items that are included in the report. Again, the principal is often called upon to submit a general report concerning the school activities that have been carried on during the year, parent-teachers' meetings held, and general economic and social conditions in his particular ward or wards. Such a report requires the keeping of accurate records and will take an hour or two for its compilation. The amounts of time here estimated for the various reports have been

computed on the supposition of a well-organized and systematized system of keeping records and data of every sort that are needed in the making of these different reports.

g) *Schedules*.—At the beginning of every year a number of schedules must be made out to regulate the general affairs of the school. These schedules for the most part will need very little modification during the year, except in schools where mid-year enrolment and promotion are practiced. Even in such cases only certain schedules will be affected, and they can usually be readily adjusted. Much depends, to be sure, upon the care and wisdom with which the schedules are made out in the first place. The number of schedules and the complexity of their structure will depend upon the number of grades in the building, the number of special lines of work carried on, the physical equipment of the school, and the general policy of administration. The most important schedules are as follows: Schedule of convening, intermissions, and dismissal of the various rooms; schedule of the duties of each teacher for periods of a week, two weeks, etc., as the case may be, on the playgrounds, in the halls, in toilet-rooms, and in classrooms during the period that pupils are permitted to come on the grounds and into the building before school convenes, during intermissions, and at dismissals; schedule of classes in departmental units; schedule of special classes such as manual training, drawing, etc., and the adjustment of the regular schedule for the days on which the special work is given; schedule of the visits of supervisors to the various classrooms for the purpose of conducting or aiding the teachers in conducting such lines of activity as play and games, music, drawing, etc.; schedule of general examinations and issuance of report cards; schedule of assemblies of certain grades or departmental units; schedule of teachers' meetings and adjustment of regular schedule for these days. The time required in the working out of these schedules will depend very largely upon

the adequacy of the school equipment, the care with which the grading of pupils has been made, and the stability of the school population from year to year. Once the lines of work have been well established in a thoroughly organized school situation that fluctuates very little in population, only minor readjustments in carefully constructed schedules will be necessary from year to year and from semester to semester. Most schools are growing and changing enough, however, to require considerable attention to schedules each year. The task will ordinarily take at least five to ten hours of concentrated effort. Even tentative schedules require much care, for in order to be of value they must be practically the same as the final permanent ones. The complexity of schedules and the difficulty in constructing them are often increased by the introduction of some new line of activity. And again the situation is frequently affected materially by the changing of one or more teachers.

h) Commencement exercises.—The custom of having public commencement exercises for the graduates of the elementary schools has become so common that this is an important duty of the building principal. The principal is responsible for the commencement program. He must secure the speaker if an address is to be given, and arrange for whatever other numbers may be desirable to make a well-balanced program. If the school has an auditorium or there is one available in some central building, the principal must see that the date of the commencement does not conflict with some other public function that will be held in the same hall. The hall must be in order and appropriately decorated for the occasion. Announcements must be given out to the public through the newspapers, and printed programs gotten out for the evening of the commencement. The graduating class must be met and instructed or rehearsed in its part of the performance. The graduating certificates or diplomas must be signed by

the principal and other school officials and fully prepared so that they may be presented to the pupils. The principal must see to it that all of these things are properly attended to at the right time. No definite estimate of time can be given for this part of the principal's work, for many of the items are of such a nature that they are looked after singly at appropriate times during the latter part of the school year, and especially during the last few weeks. Altogether, however, they take several hours of time and involve considerable responsibility.

2. DAILY ROUTINE DUTIES

A number of daily routine items requires the attention of the principal. Some of these can be looked after in a systematic fashion at a regular time, while others must be taken care of as they come up during the day. A fairly definite scheme can be worked out for the management of all these items, however, and such a scheme saves time and energy on the part of the principal.

a) *Inspection of building and grounds.*—One of the first acts of the principal upon arriving at school should be to make a brief yet careful inspection of the school grounds to see that they are in a fit condition for use during the day. Many grounds are easily affected by bad weather and should not be used after rains and snow storms unless they are frozen solid. Sometimes they are not safe for the children to play upon when they are frozen hard. The grounds should be kept free from trash and obstructions that might endanger the safety of pupils at free play. Winds and marauders often leave trash and obstructions on the school grounds over night and over the week end. The habit of checking up on this item is important. The external condition of the building or buildings should also be inspected along with the grounds. Storms often loosen metal work around the

cornice and gables, or perhaps some of the guttering and slate or tiles may have been loosened so that there is danger of falling materials upon walks or the grounds where the children will be playing. When thaws come after heavy snows or sleets, there is always danger that the accumulation of snow and sleet upon the roofs may give way at any time and fall in such mass as seriously to menace the safety of the children. The principal must see to it daily that these dangers are avoided. The buildings should also be daily inspected in order that the principal may see that no malicious or mischievous individuals have defaced the walls with scurrilous, obscene, or other drawings, writing, or cutting. Such defacements should be removed before the pupils arrive.

b) Inspection of janitor service.—The second duty which should be performed daily is that of a complete inspection of the interior of the building from basement to attic. That is to say, the principal should visit every part of the building which is in daily use to insure that it is in proper condition for the day. The best of janitors will overlook small items that are of vital importance in the education of boys and girls. Pencil marks and ink spots should not be allowed to accumulate on the school furniture, but should be carefully effaced each day. This includes the window sills and casings, doors, and the fixtures in the toilet-rooms, walls, etc. This point cannot be emphasized too strongly. Dust must not be allowed to accumulate behind radiators, in corners, on book shelves, etc. Floors are not always swept carefully. Blackboards are sometimes neglected if no check is kept on their condition. Toilet supplies should be carefully checked up to make sure that they are in proper place in sufficient quantities for the day. Window shades, door locks, seats, and apparatus are often slightly out of order or repair and need immediate attention to render them serviceable and to avoid needless damage and loss through neglect. Teachers'

desks should not be permitted to be kept in an untidy and jumbled-up condition. Apparatus should not be left lying around carelessly when not in use. The temperature and humidity of the various classrooms should be noted in order that the rooms may be ready for good school work when the time arrives for school to convene. Practically all of these items just enumerated are a part of the work of the janitor and an efficient janitor will look after them most of the time. If the principal has such a janitor, he can accomplish his daily inspection in a very short time. The habit of making such detailed inspection, however, is invaluable and an important daily duty of the building principal. The inspection of building and grounds and of the janitor service can be accomplished in ten to fifteen minutes, according to the area of the grounds, the size of the building, and the efficiency of the janitor.

c) *General management of pupils on the playgrounds and about the building during the period in which they are permitted to come upon the premises before school work begins.*—The principal must not only have a definite organization of his teaching force for the management of affairs during the periods of free play and recreative activities, but he must keep in sufficient contact with the situation at all times to know that the plan is thoroughly carried out. He must either give the signals or see that they are given for calling the pupils into organized groups for the purpose of moving systematically and with the least confusion and loss of time into their respective classrooms. And, again, at dismissal times, he must see that the proper signals are given and that the groups pass out or move to whatever places they should go in a definite order and in a definite period of time. If the principal has a well-organized staff of teachers, he will have very little to do except to be on hand to take action in the case of emergency or accident that might require a readjustment of the

plan of ordinary procedure. The principal needs, however, to keep these periods as free from the performance of other duties as possible so that he may employ the time and avail himself of the opportunity of coming into personal touch with the various groups of pupils and influencing the moral atmosphere of the play environment. The presence of the principal in an attitude of interest and sympathetic appreciation of the various activities in which the pupils are engaged goes far toward preventing serious disciplinary problems from arising.

d) *Excluding pupils from school.*—Children sometimes come to school when they are physically unfit for school work. Again, they may come when they have been exposed to some contagious disease, and may cause its spread if permitted to remain. Then, too, occasionally a pupil comes to school in such an uncleanly condition that he should be sent home and given proper attention before being permitted to return. The principal is responsible for deciding such cases, and he should be alert to discover them during the morning and noon periods of free play that precede the convening of classes. The teachers should likewise be alert to catch such cases as may come under their direct observation in their rooms. These cases should be reported to the principal during the first few minutes after school opens, or at any time that the evidences of such conditions become apparent. The first half-hour after school convenes at morning and noon should be reserved by the principal for dealing with these cases of personal and general hygiene. Whenever a pupil is excluded for any reason, the principal should communicate with the parent either by telephone or in writing, explaining the situation and making appropriate suggestions.

e) *Attendance.*—At the beginning of each school session the teachers report the names of pupils who are absent from their rooms. The principal at once takes steps to learn the

causes for such absences and to get the pupils to school if possible. He communicates with the parents whenever this is possible and tries through their co-operation to secure the desired information and in some cases the action that is necessary to meet the emergency. Sometimes the problem is one of truancy on the part of the pupil abetted by the parent. Then the truant officer must be notified and records made of the facts bearing upon the situation. Some principals require tardy pupils to be sent to them for permits before they can be admitted to their classes. The principal in such cases often communicates with the parents to verify the reasons given by the pupils for their tardiness. These matters of absence and tardiness usually come during the first half or three-quarters of an hour at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. They can usually be taken care of along with the problems of personal hygiene and ordinary disciplinary cases that may come to the principal for attention.

f) General and special discipline.—The building principal is responsible for the policy of general discipline and for the organization of the necessary machinery to carry it out. The offenses of pupils on the grounds and about the buildings outside of the individual classrooms are cases for the principal to deal with. Teachers are authorized to bring such cases to the principal's attention and to give the information upon which he must base his decisions, but, except in cases of minor importance, the principal must administer the disciplinary measures that are employed for the education of the individuals and the general betterment of the social conditions. These cases can usually be taken care of during the periods of free play. Grave offenses must sometimes be carried over into the class periods and may at times take several hours to secure satisfactory results.

Special problems of discipline arise whenever the pupils commit offenses in the classrooms which require action that

is beyond the authority of the teachers or are too difficult for the teachers to handle without assistance. The pupils in such cases are sent to the office of the principal and are dealt with at such time and in such manner as seems best according to the nature of the case. Such cases may require a few minutes of strenuous action or they may take considerable time. They may demand immediate attention, or they may be of such a character that they can be dealt with after school has been dismissed. These cases are few in number in some schools and quite numerous in others. The principal never knows when they will arise, but that such cases will come up for settlement is certain, and the principal must find the time for dealing with them.

g) *Luncheon pupils*.—Some schools are so situated that a number of the pupils do not have sufficient time during the noon intermission to go home for luncheon. These pupils regularly bring their luncheons. Other pupils are so situated with reference to the school that on stormy days and severely cold days they cannot go home and get back on time, or without enduring too much exposure. The principal must know who the regular luncheon pupils are and who the emergency luncheon pupils are. Facilities must be provided for all so that they will be under proper supervision during the eating of their lunches and during the full noon interim. The principal needs to check up each day to see that his plan for taking care of this situation is properly administered and to be sure that only those pupils remain who have a legitimate reason for doing so.

Some schools have provision made for warm lunches for all children. Sometimes the facilities are not such that all the rooms can be accommodated at the same time, hence a definite scheme and time schedule must be adhered to in administering the lunch activities. The principal must work out the order of procedure according to the capacity of the

lunch facilities, the size of the various groups of pupils, and the class schedules of the different rooms. After the situation is well organized and well in hand, the principal may need to give only a few minutes' time daily to insure that everything is going right and to take care of any emergency that may arise.

3. MISCELLANEOUS DUTIES

Several miscellaneous activities that are essential to the welfare and development of a modern school require the attention of the principal at different times during the school year. The amount of time cannot be estimated very accurately, but a considerable number of hours will be consumed in planning and directing some of these activities if they are carried on in any thorough, systematic sort of manner. Certain of these duties will require only general supervision after they have been well organized.

a) *Fire drills*.—Fire drills are an essential part of the school safety measures; hence they must be carried on from the outset. The usual plan is to warn the teachers and pupils that a drill will be given at a certain time when the fire signal is given. The teachers and pupils are instructed as to the route and order each room shall take to clear the building in the least possible time with safety. These prearranged drills are carried on every two or three days for the first few weeks until everyone knows what to do and how to do it. After the principal is satisfied that the school has had sufficient drill to enable him to clear the building at any time he desires without danger of accidents, he issues the general instructions that the fire warning may be given on any day at any time, and that the usual procedure is to be followed at such times. Thereafter he gives the fire signal whenever in his judgment it should be done to keep up the drill and to accustom the pupils to acting promptly and without undue excitement in an emergency.

b) School enterprises and activities.—A wide-awake principal in charge of a vigorous group of red-blooded young Americans usually finds it profitable and educative to organize and carry on a number of general and special activities. The school may give an entertainment for the purpose of raising funds with which to purchase library books, pictures, victrola, piano, etc. Or the school may be organized into teams and undertake the selling of goods of some kind to raise the money needed. Then there are educational activities such as the boys' manual arts club, girls' sewing-club, boys' and girls' civic club, and the athletic teams. These clubs may be made the means of furthering the social education of the pupils as well as stimulating all their school activities. Efficient organization requires genius and vigorous, enthusiastic participation on the part of the principal. The time and energy spent in connection with these various activities will be considerable if they are made worth while, but the educational results are commensurable with the costs; hence many principals give particular attention to this phase of general education.

c) Parent-teacher organizations.—The up-to-date principal is the chief factor in the movement to interest parents in the general welfare of the school and to bring about a closer co-operation between teachers and parents. The parent-teacher club is the common device for securing the co-operation of parents in promoting such educational movements as medical and dental inspection, psychopathic clinics, school lunches, facilities for visual education, etc. The principal is expected to suggest topics for discussion and speakers for the regular periodic meetings that are held by the organization. The principal also finds these meetings one of the best means for reporting progress in the various lines of school work, and for setting forth the educational policies and purposes that he is undertaking to inaugurate in an effective manner.

The principal who feels the responsibility of educating the adult members of his ward will spend a goodly number of hours of time in intensive planning and execution of important educational propaganda through the medium of the parent-teacher club.

d) Teachers' meetings.—The building principal generally holds meetings of the teachers under his supervision at regular times during the year. Some follow the practice of meeting on Friday for a half-hour and usually dismiss the pupils fifteen minutes early so that the teachers are not kept long after four o'clock. These short meetings are for the purpose of discussing matters of common interest and general management. The principal makes announcements of general plans, suggests improvements, hears complaints and suggestions from the teachers, etc. Some principals hold monthly meetings of an hour or longer for the purpose of discussing adaptations and modifications of the curriculum, or for the consideration of professional reading that the teachers are required to do for their improvement while in active service. The principal appoints committees to work out details of proposed changes in curriculum and leaders for the discussion of the professional readings. He must keep posted on the readings and familiarize himself with the practices in other schools in matters of curricula and teacher training. This phase of the principal's work demands initiative, leadership, intellectual training, experience, and industry.

e) School exhibits.—Schools in which manual arts of various kinds and domestic arts are carried on very often follow the practice of giving exhibits of the products of these various lines of work. These exhibits may be given at the close of the school year or at special times during the year, such as through a Thanksgiving program and school exhibit, Christmas holiday exhibit, Washington's birthday exhibit, etc. The nature and extent of the exhibit are a problem for the building

principal to decide. He must work out the general plan and much of the details of the whole scheme that is to be followed by the teachers in securing the materials and arranging them for an effective display. A publicity campaign must be waged to interest the parents and get them out to see the exhibit. A definite arrangement must be made for meeting all visitors, for conducting them to the various displays, and for giving information that will be helpful in arousing in the visitors an appreciation of the significance and value of the displays. The time and attention that will be necessary for arranging a first-class school exhibit are difficult to estimate, but if one could keep accurate account of the time thus spent, it would certainly be found to amount to at least two or three days of intensive effort.

II. TEACHING OR PEDAGOGICAL DUTIES

Three general aspects of teaching are involved in the entire program of the activities of the building principal, namely, teaching classes, supervising the work of his teachers, and adapting subject-matter and courses of study to groups and individual pupils. The amount of time devoted to each of these activities depends upon the type of school system in which the principal is employed.

I. TEACHING CLASSES

The principal in the type A or small school system usually teaches an upper grade; or, if the school is organized on the departmental plan for the middle and upper grades, the principal teaches all the classes in one subject. He may teach only part of the classes in one subject, or two or three classes in different subjects. The greater part of his time, however, is occupied in actual teaching.

The same situation in general prevails in the B type of school system. If the departmental plan is in practice, the

principal is free from the actual charge of a class or grade whenever he is not teaching and can give his attention to some of the administrative duties already discussed, or to other pedagogical activities.

The fact is obvious that the principal in the type A or type B system must spend a good many hours of evenings, Saturdays, and even Sundays in planning and carrying out many of the administrative duties that devolve upon him. The laborer works from whistle to whistle, but the building principal seldom finds time to lay down his duties. If building principals were hired by the hour or for a definite number of hours for a working day, they would do no teaching, and they would have to be furnished clerical and other helps to make it possible for them effectively to accomplish their duties.

2. SUPERVISING TEACHING

The principal devotes as much time as he can to the supervision of the actual classroom performance of his teachers. If most of the teachers are experienced, efficient, and thoroughly reliable, then the amount of actual classroom visitation need not be so very great. On the other hand, if a number of the teachers are new to the school, or are just beginning the responsible work of teaching, then the principal must give them considerable attention and assistance. The principal must meet these teachers for individual conferences about their work. He must visit their rooms frequently, and sometimes even teach some of their classes to help them get the situation thoroughly in hand. This becomes a difficult matter when the principal is tied up at certain hours with regular teaching duties, for he can obviously not see all of the lines of work carried on without having the beginning teacher's class program rotated for his benefit in making visits. A shifting program is too confusing for the untrained teacher,

hence the principal must at times drop his other duties to supervise the work of new teachers, and he must devise methods of supervision without visiting the classroom. He usually does this by means of outlines put into the hands of the teachers, and by requiring the teachers to work out detailed lesson plans long enough in advance of the teaching to enable him to go over them with the teachers and make suggestions for their improvement. This sort of supervision may be made very effective, but it means a good many after-school hours for both teachers and supervisor or principal.

The number of hours devoted to classroom visitations by the principal in the type A and type B systems each day will usually not exceed two or three at most, and may be less than one on the average. The principal in the type C school system generally does not teach any classes; hence he has an opportunity for giving real supervision to his teachers. He frequently, however, has two or three buildings under his charge, and thus the number of visits made to each teacher is rather small. Most of his time during the school day is supposed to be occupied in this type of pedagogical work. The time is often largely wasted because the principal is not trained for the task of active supervision of teaching. He may be highly successful in carrying on the detailed administrative duties. And he may be competent in the working out of large phases of educational improvement and in inaugurating new lines of activity; he may be a strong leader of the community in all matters pertaining to educational and civic betterment, and yet be of very little help to his teachers in solving the difficulties of classroom instruction. One of the large duties, however, that devolves upon the principal is this duty of inspecting, supervising, and passing judgment upon the detailed activities carried on by his teachers in the classrooms.

3. ADAPTING SUBJECT-MATTER AND COURSES OF STUDY TO PUPILS

Another important duty of the building principal is so to study the needs of his community and the various groups of pupils in his school that he may adapt the materials of education to meet their needs most effectively. This duty requires the principal to become as intimately acquainted as possible with every individual pupil and with every group of children in his school. One of the devices that is used by principals is that of giving standard tests at irregular intervals during the school year. The data thus secured afford a basis for comparison of the status of individual with individual in the same group and of group with similar groups in the same school system. The comparisons enable the principal to determine what modifications are needed in subject-matter and in method to bring individuals and groups up to a satisfactory stage of accomplishment. Racial and national differences must be taken into account as well as the economic activities of the community. This requires the principal to visit the industries and vocational pursuits of the community that he may know what the activities are in general for which he must prepare the majority of the pupils. All of this will require considerable of time and energy. Just how much time it is difficult to estimate, inasmuch as this sort of study will be carried on at irregular times and in a variety of ways.

CONCLUSION

A careful survey of the duties performed by building principals as set forth leads one to conclude that there are plenty of definite detailed activities for the principals to carry on which do not encroach upon the spheres of teachers or the superintendent. Some overlapping is not only unavoidable, but desirable and highly essential for bringing about the closest sort of articulation of the work of school officers.